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SUBJECT: FARC COMMUNIQUE REJECTS IDEA OF HUMANITARIAN
PRISONER EXCHANGE

REF: 05 BOGOTA 11611

¶1. (SBU) In a four paragraph written communique dated December 29 (Spanish version emailed to WHA/AND), the FARC rejected the possibility of humanitarian prisoner exchange during the Uribe Administration. While sharply critical of Uribe, the communique welcomed the good offices of France, Switzerland, and Spain in having proposed the "international commission security zone proposal" (see reftel). President Uribe responded on January 3, publicly describing the FARC as kidnapers, thieves, and buffoons. Local press reports the French FM will soon travel to Colombia to work toward release of dual Colombia/French citizen Ingrid Betancourt and other FARC hostages.

¶2. (SBU) The GOC continues to assure us that any humanitarian exchange would include the three American hostages. Ambassador will be meeting with his French counterpart late on January 3 to ascertain additional information.

¶3. (U) Begin informal Embassy translation of FARC Communique:

With Uribe There Will Be No Humanitarian Exchange (title)

The principal obstacle to humanitarian exchange is the absence of political will by the current President of Colombia. It is no secret that during more than three years Uribe has preferred military rescue of prisoners; that in this tact he has used the entire war power of the state and the many millions of dollars provided by the government of the United States, without favorable results. It was precisely his insensitivity that forced the lamentable result of the Urrao mountains, where the governor of Antioquia and former defense minister Echeverri Mejia, among others, were killed.

We understand that in his haste to exploit for electoral purposes the initiative by the facilitating countries for an exchange accord, he has trashed an entire diplomatic effort. At the same time that we lament this hasty and fickle attitude of the President, we recognize the good offices of the governments of France, Switzerland, and Spain. The problem is Uribe as candidate attempts to manipulate the entire world with sophistry and false humility. To affirm, as he did from Vista Hermosa, that illegal crops in the Macarena belong to the FARC and to declare war on the civil

population by way of the media, is a reproachable act that only attempts to divert the attention of the country from the tremendous failure of the Democratic Security Policy, with clear electoral purposes.

For years we have sought a humanitarian exchange in order that those deprived of liberty on both sides depart prisons or mountains and be reunited with their loved ones, but under neither Pastrana nor Uribe have we encountered reciprocity. We attained no gesture from the government after liberating more than 300 military members and police officers, prisoners of war. Mr. Uribe, in spite of the melancholic results of Plan Patriota, seems to be set on rescue by blood and gunfire. He addressed the FARC as if it were a defeated guerrilla group, he creates divides by disqualifying the adversary and major pitfalls by extraditing Simon (Trinidad) and Sonia to the United States.

It is clear that under Uribe there will be no humanitarian exchange. The country needs a President with political will, not only for humanitarian exchange, but also to come to agreement with the insurgency, with the participation of the people, for a solution to the conflict based on structural change in the social, economic, political, and other orders, that benefit the majorities.

Central Secretariat of the FARC-EP
Mountains of Colombia
December 29, 2005

End informal Embassy translation.
WOOD